

MEXICO / this month ~ December 1957

In this issue - poinsettias,
angels, children & how to
win the national lottery

MEXICO / this month



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OF SPECIAL INTEREST

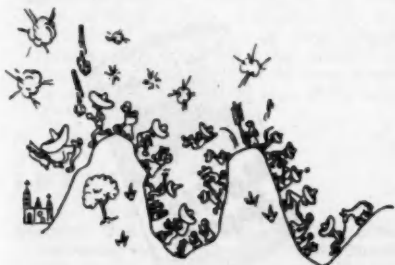
December 12 — Day of the Virgin of Guadalupe, one of the most important religious fiestas of the year, particularly in the capital. Tens of thousands of worshippers come to pay homage to the "Brown Virgin". Among these are representatives of many Indian tribes, some of whom walk for hundreds of kilometers to reach the Virgin and hold dances for her. The mob fills the entire huge Basilica plaza, (and pickpockets are also present). Special Guadalupean bullfights are usually held from December 7-12 to raise funds for the Virgin.

December 16-24 — The Christmas season in Mexico opens with nine days of posadas, traditional parties which evoke the Holy Family's journey to Bethlehem. There are parades with sacred images, pastoral plays, piñatas, group singing and religious ceremonies. The doors of many houses are thrown open to welcome the "pilgrims".

December 23 — Festival of the Radishes (Noche de Rábanos) in Oaxaca City. Gigantic radishes in extraordinary shapes are displayed in the main Plaza. Buñuelos, thin, crisp, flaky pastry pancakes with syrup, are sold on a special plate, which, after the buñuelo is eaten is thrown up in the air and broken. Christmas Eve in Oaxaca is celebrated with Calendas, night parades in which people carry lighted lanterns and sacred images through the streets.

December 24 — Noche Buena, Christmas Eve. High Mass is celebrated throughout the country, after which lavish banquets are held in the homes.

December 28 — Día de los Inocentes, Mexico's version of April Fool's Day with the same sort of pranks. Don't lend money to anyone on this day.



December 31 — San Juan Chamula, San Andrés Chamula, Zinacantan and other towns in Chiapas celebrate the installation of Indian authorities for the coming year with ceremonies of pre-Spanish origin. More than 5000 come from neighboring villages to San Juan Chamula.

December 31 — On a hillock near the entrance to Mitla people build fires and demonstrate their wishes in miniature for the coming year on this night called Noche del Pedimento (Wishing Night). They build tiny houses, fields, ox carts and make representations of cattle and other animals, all in toy size. This continues all night and is quite picturesque. Tourists are advised to go discreetly dressed.

Preview

WHAT TO SEE, WHERE TO GO IN

december

IN THIS ISSUE WE ARE FEATURING

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fiestas & spectacles

La Paz, Baja California, Dec. 3. Fiesta honoring the town's patron saint, St. Francis Xavier.

Ojo Caliente, Zacatecas, Dec. 3-12. Fiestas of national character dedicated to the Virgin of Guadalupe. Bullfights, fireworks, cockfights and religious ceremonies.

Mérida, Yucatán, Dec. 4-12. Fiesta Guadalupeana in the San Cristóbal section of the city where the temple dedicated to the Virgin of Guadalupe is located. The pilgrims who come in large numbers to pay homage to the Virgin later enjoy carnival attractions set up in the park facing the church. A grand celebration will cap the events on the 11th with lotteries, theatrical shows, music, dancing and a serenade to the Virgin.

Pátzcuaro, Michoacán, Dec. 8. Traditional celebration in honor of Our Lady of Health. Parade of floats, bullfights and regional dances, featuring Los Viejos, Moros y Cristianos and Las Mojigangas.

Cuahtitlán, México, Dec. 8. Religious celebration of the Immaculate Conception.

San Luis Potosí, S.L.P., Dec. 1-15. Exhibitions, plays, ballet, typical dances to mark the close of the school year at the San Luis Potosí Institute of Fine Arts.

Guadalupe, Zacatecas, Dec. 12. This fiesta is of particular interest because of the enthusiasm with which this town that bears her name throws itself into the festivities in honor of the Virgin of Guadalupe.

San Marcos, Jalisco, Dec. 12. One of the most typical fiestas in honor of the Virgin of Guadalupe, with bullfights, cockfights, jaripeos, games and dances. The famous La Pluma and Moros a Caballo dances will be featured.

Cosamaloapan, Veracruz, Dec. 8 and 12. These fiestas are in honor of the Virgin of Guadalupe and the Immaculate Conception and give full rein to the traditional happy spirit of the people of Veracruz, which manifests itself in the beautiful Veracruz huapangos and dances.

OUR COVER



On January 6, Mexican children leave their shoes out so that the 3 Wise Men, who brought gifts to the Christ child, can leave them presents. Faced with a vertical cover that did not lend itself to a procession of 3 Wise Men mounted on horse, camel and elephant, our artist put them all on the horse.



MEXICO today

By JOHN A. CROW

Author of

The Epic of Latin America

Whether you have been to Mexico, or hope to go there, you will find *Mexico Today* informative, stimulating and always entertaining. Mr. Crow, an expert in the field of Latin-American civilization and an admirer of the Mexican way of life, has written not a conventional guidebook but a lively interpretation of the people and the country.

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HARPER & BROTHERS

An up-to-the-minute, well-rounded picture of

Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, Dec. 5. Celebration of the founding of the city with a fair, dances of Matlachines, serenades and music.

San Miguel Allende, Guanajuato, Dec. 16-24. One of the oldest towns in Mexico, founded 1524, of particular interest because of its colonial architecture, San Miguel de Allende provides a perfect setting for the posadas (See Special Events). The whole town participates in the presentation of Los Nacimientos and the Pastorelas, dramatizations of the bible.

Fresnillo, Zacatecas, Dec. 11-25. Christmas festivities and ceremonies honoring the Virgin of Guadalupe are combined in a two-week long fiesta with serenades in front of the church, Las Mañanitas and posadas.

Guanajuato, Guanajuato, Dec. 16-24. Christmas here, in the heart of the Independence country, is observed in the classic Mexican manner with a strong folkloric aspect to the posadas and other festivities.

art

Galería Antonio Souza, Génova 61-2. Exposition of paintings by Lilia Carrillo and sculpture by Manuel Felgueres.

Galería Carmel, Carmel Arts (Restaurant Carmel), Génova 70. Engravings by young Mexican artists.

Galería Proteo, Génova 39, 2nd floor. The last works of Arturo Souto will be exhibited beginning Jan. 9.

Instituto de Arte de México, Puebla 141. Caricatures by the French artist Daumier will be shown this month in an exhibition that may be continued through January.

Galerías Excelsior, Reforma 18. Collective exposition featuring the Christmas motif.

Galerías Romano, José María Marroqui 5. Collective exhibition on the theme of the Mexican Revolution. Christmas flower arrangements in the vestibule.

Galería de Arte Mexicano, Milán 18. Show by Pablo O'Higgins.

Galerías Femex, Ave. Juárez 89. Dec. 9-21, paintings by Márquez; from Dec. 23-Jan. 4, exhibition by Badillo.

Galería de Artes Plásticas de la Ciudad de México, in the pergola of the Central Alameda. The show by famous Mexican caricaturist García Cabral will continue through the month of December.

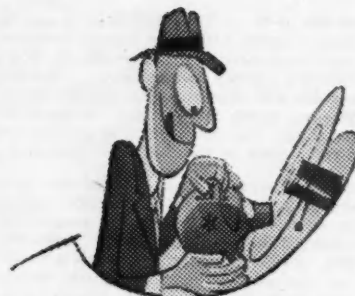
Galería de Arte Contemporáneo, Ambarés 12. Exhibition and sale of work donated by artists for the benefit of the Casa de Cuna orphanage.

Galerías Chapultepec, at the entrance to Chapultepec Park near the monument to the Niños Héroes. "Visión de Yucatán". Exhibition sponsored by the Instituto Nacional de Artes, the state of Yucatán and the Grupo Asociación Civil Yucateca.

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theater

All My Sons — Arthur Miller drama, presented in English by Players, A. C., under direction of Seki Sano. Daily at 8:30 pm, except Monday, until Dec. 14. Tel. 25-31-56. At Villalongin 32.

Ring, Ring - Llama el Amor — The musical review *Bell are Ringing*, starring Silvia Pinal with Miguel Manzano and Manolita Saval. Directed by Louis del Liano. Teatro del Bosque, behind National Auditorium on Reforma. 20-88-38. Daily at 8 pm. Saturday at 7 and 10 pm and Sundays at 5 and 8 pm.

Angel Sin Pecado — First Run dramatic comedy of Wilberto Cantón, Mexican writer. With Kitty de Hoyos, Sara Guash, and Alejandro Cianguerotti. Director, Jebert Darién. Teatro Juárez, Ave. Oaxaca 58. Tel. 35-04-74. Two shows daily at 7:15 and 9:45 pm, Sunday 5 and 8 pm.

music

Concerts — On December 2, 5, 11 and 13, all the schools and academies of Music in Mexico City will hold graduation concerts and recitals, at 8:00 pm in the Sala Ponce at the Palace of Fine Arts.

Open Air Concerts — On the first two Sundays in December symphonic concerts will be played at 11:00 am in the patio of the School of Architecture at University City.

Popular Concerts — Every Sunday, at 11:00 am, in various parks of Mexico City, free symphonic concerts will be given, organized by the Office of Social Activity of the Federal District. One of these places is in Chapultepec, on the edge of the lake. Drop in.

sports

Baseball: The Mexican Baseball Association announces the following games for December, to be held in the Social Security Park. Tuesday to Friday at 8:15 pm. Saturdays at 3:15 pm. Sundays at 11:30 a.m. except for double-headers; when the first game starts at 10:30. Participating teams are: México, Aztecas, Poza Rica, Córdoba, Jalapa and Puebla.

Volleyball: The Mexican Volleyball Federation informs us that they expect a juvenile Cuban all-star team to visit Mexico during the middle part of December. Watch the daily papers.

Basketball: At the Deportivo Chapultepec will be held from Nov. 23 to Dec. 3, the National Youth Games. Free entrance. Feminine games will be held in the Law Gymnasium during December.

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Mercaderes 51

And just off the press, "Man vs. Beast" — a 50 cent (U.S.) pocket-book on bull-fighting, with illustrations.

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Rowing: The Rowing Association, which supervises the España, Mexicano, Antares and Lakeside clubs will hold training for all clubs during December as there are good chances that an International Rowing Tournament will be held in the U.S.

Frontón: No activities during December.

Tennis — Two national tournaments this month. The Acapulco Tournament and the official contest between the Tennis Association and the Tennis Federation. Consult daily newspapers.

Soccer — The Mexican Soccer Federation has announced its schedule for December:
Dec. 1 — Mexico City, Necaxa-Atlante; Guadalajara, Cuautla-Guadalajara; León, León-América; Tampico, Tampico-Atlas; Toluca, Toluca-Irapuato; Zacatepec, Zacatepec-Morelia; Zamora, Zamora-Oro.

DECEMBER CLIMATE

CITY	TEMP. (°F.)	RAIN (Inches)
Acapulco	79	0.4
Cuernavaca	66	0.1
Guadalajara	59	0.8
Merida	74	1.2
Mexico	54	0.3
Monterrey	57	0.9
Oaxaca	64	0.4
Puebla	56	0.3
Taxco	67	0.1
Tehuantepec	66	0.6
Veracruz	72	1.0

Dec. 5.—Mexico City, América-Tampico; Guadalajara, Oro-Guadalajara.

Dec. 8 — Mexico City, Atlante-Irapuato; Guadalajara, Atlas-Zacatepec; León, León-Toluca; Cuautla, Cuautla-Necaxa; Morelia, Morelia-Zamora.

Dec. 15 — Mexico City, Necaxa-Oro; Guadalajara, Guadalajara-Morelia; Tampico, Tampico-León; Zacatepec, Zacatepec-América; Toluca, Toluca-Atlante; Irapuato, Irapuato-Cuautla; Zamora, Zamora-Atlas.

Dec. 19.—Guadalajara, Oro-Irapuato.

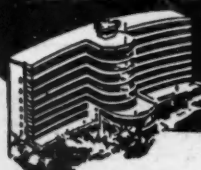
Dec. 22 — Mexico City, América-Zamora; Guadalajara, Atlas-Guadalajara; León, León-Zacatepec; Tampico, Tampico-Toluca; Cuautla, Cuautla-Atlante; Morelia, Morelia-Necaxa.

Dec. 26 — Mexico City, Necaxa-Atlas.

Dec. 29 — Mexico City, Atlante-Oro; Guadalajara, Guadalajara-América; Zacatepec, Zacatepec-Tampico; Toluca-Cuautla; Irapuato, Irapuato-Morelia; Zamora, Zamora-León.

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horses

Polo: At the Anáhuac Polo Grounds, at the far end of Chapultepec Park. Games will be held every day at 12:00 between various teams of the Mexican Polo Federation. Free entry.

Races: At the Hipódromo de las Américas. On the 15th Dec. running of the Windsor Classic and on the 29th the Futurist-Mexican Handicap.

Charros: The National Charro Federation will give many exhibitions during the month of December at various ranches in the capital. These ranches are "La Tapatia" on Molino del Rey Avenue, "Rancho del Hormiguero" on the Calzada Azcapotzalco-La Villa, and "Rancho Santa Anita" at Santa Anita. Exhibition days are generally on Sundays at 11:00 a.m. 180 Charro groups will meet soon in Guadalajara for the National Charro Congress to make plant for next year's fiestas.

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bullfights

Through special sources we have learned that the traditional plaza "El Cortijo", will officially inaugurate its Bullfighting School in December. The teaching method is both visual and practical as it will be united with a bullfighting museum full of paintings and classic reproductions of bullfighting history. The museum will also be solemnly inaugurated during December and fans will be able to trace the history of the fiesta brava from its beginnings on the island of Crete, 1,500 B.C., through its golden days in Rome, then to Spain and the introduction to America. The most glorious stars of bullfighting will be portrayed there: Manolete, Armillita, Sánchez Mejía, etc. See your newspaper for opening dates.

OF SPECIAL INTEREST IN COMING MONTHS

Day of the Kings — January 6 marks the end of Christmas festivities. This is the traditional day for exchanging gifts. Markets, stores and street vendors blossom out with characteristic toys.

San Antonio de Padua — January 17 is dedicated to the patron saint of domestic animals which are blessed in all the churches.

Fiesta of San Sebastián — This fiesta, on January 20, is particularly colorful in Zinacantan, Chiapas, whose patron saint is visited by the Virgin of Ixtapa, and also in Chiapa de Corzo where pre-Spanish flavored ceremonies feature masked boy dancers, fireworks and a "naval battle" of canoes in the Grijalva river.

February 2 — **Día de la Candelaria**, on which all those who received a doll in their serving of **Rosca de Reyes** (special pastry in which a tiny metal doll is hidden), on the Day of the Kings, are supposed to give a fiesta.

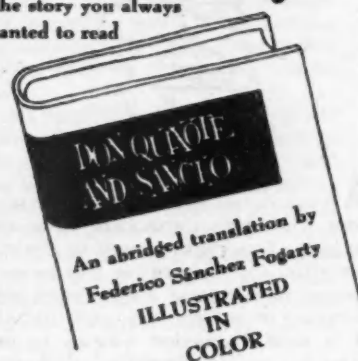
Constitution Day — February 5 commemorates the Constitution of 1857, which embodied the liberal reforms championed by Benito Juárez, as well the Constitution of 1917 which came out of the 1910 Revolution.

Carnaval — On February 18th, in San Juan Chamula, Chiapas, thousands of Indians gather for pagan-flavored rites of great antiquity. In this, the most spectacular of all Chiapas Indian festivals, an avenue of dry grass is spread, set on fire, and young dancers rush up and down stamping out the fire with their bare feet.

Mardi Gras — Carnival in many cities of the Republic from February 28 to March 5. Among the most important are Veracruz, Mazatlán, Monterrey, Acapulco, Huejotzingo, Jalapa, Tampico and Tepotlán.

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A year or so ago we had our say about Christmas Cards, and now we are going to address ourself to Christmas gifts. Our reward for this impertinence may be that fewer gifts are addressed to us. Anyway, and first of all, a wide distinction needs to be drawn between the Christmas package, *per se*, and the gift hidden therein. But this is a new season, and when the first package arrives you get a thrill even while signing for it and before you have had a chance to give it an appraisal. Of course, when you have the package firmly in your arms you are surprised at the poor notice gravity gives to it. But, when the outer wrapping is pulled off, your expectation is heightened by the tasteful decor: brightly striped paper, silk bows, a small pine cone tied on top, and also one of those charming straw animals that could only have come from Germany. Surely, a good deal of thought and care, discrimination — and money? — was spent on this present, although it does feel extremely light.

By Christmas Eve, there are many such packages under the Christmas tree, the gaudiest well in front. Your own secret is that the ones you have tucked in among them, as gifts from you to all the members of the household, plus the perennial droppers-in, will create delirium when opened, so that you will be enormously hugged and kissed. You remind yourself that you must make an exaggerated show of liking what you get.

And what *Do* you get? You get loud remarks such as: "I never quite know what to buy David, he seems to have everything already," or, "I couldn't think what David might like, he is so difficult to please, you know, and then one day when I was passing by Charvet's I saw *this*."

You go on opening the packages and kissing the givers, and you even find yourself admiring your new collection of atrocities. It's fun. It's Christmas.

ANGUS

From our readers

SHAME

...On page 16 of your October issue you say, "Market day in Oaxaca City is Sunday". The guidebooks that I have read indicate that it is Saturday. Which is it?

Ann Spivak
Philadelphia, Pa.

The author of the article, who comes from Oaxaca, has been made to do penance. She states that she knows market day in Oaxaca City is definitely on Saturday, but that her typewriter couldn't translate this knowledge. Sorry. Hope we didn't spoil any plans.

THE EGG AND SNEAKY US

...In your October column, Angus, you stated that you were going to impose two or three mischievous thoughts. But you started long before your column. Fact is, your mischievous thoughts started on the very cover. It's a half coconut, it's a lemon, it's a wad of used Bubble Gum, it's a rock, it's a dream. Those are some comments of guessers on the "Thing". Finally, in the last paragraph on page seven you gave up the secret of Columbus and the Egg. If you did this little thing so that we would read every word you did a very fine job.

...You would be surprised at the number of people who read your magazine in my place of business. It is hard to keep my copy long as some-

one always begs me out of it.

J. W. Staley
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HELICOPTERS, ANYONE?

...Are there special regulations for hunting with bow and arrows? And, what is the hunting license fee and the season for deer, bear and other large game for bow and arrow?

Richard Hatter
CWO. U.S. Army

Hunting fees and regulations are confusing. Write to Col. Tex Purvis at Londres 80, Mexico City. He is starting a kind of Abercrombie & Fitch store in Mexico City and knows all about Mexican hunting.

In answer to many readers extra information, yes

If you are a subscriber to MTM, you can pick our brains either by letter or in person. If you are not a subscriber we cannot be so free with our services. However, if your question is a simple one, still no charge; and if the matter requires research or legwork, the charge will be as nominal as we can make it.

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MEXICO/ this month

Vol. III No. 12, November 1957

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person to person

To write about the high lift and razzle-dazzle of a Mexican Christmas sitting in San Antonio, Texas, on a day of dreary November drizzle, requires a lot more chirp than your editor can at present muster. For what has brought her to San Antonio is, principally, business of the drearier sort, much enlivened however, by learning of such doings as the mammoth turnout this town built up for our proud hero of Around the World, etc., who came here to show himself for the benefit of a poor boys' camp project.

Said project, which heretofore had been struggling along on deficits suddenly zoomed, via the Cantinflas injection of drama and the handsome P.R. job a group of San Antonio women did on it (or maybe it is really vice-versa) into affluence, liquidity, solidity, and all those very welcome and reassuring words.

Welcome also to your editor, was the interest of this same group of women in the kind of work MTM is trying to do, interpreting across the Rio, so to speak, and their handsome offers of help to us, does indeed feel like Xmas. Before they get through there probably won't be a single inhabitant of this town (and Sovereign Republic) who isn't reading MTM industriously. We're awed, to say the least.

The angels which form the central part of this issue are a sampling of the thousands upon thousands of forms this happy idea was given by the natives of Mexico, who looked at the Conquest and the Conquerors and took over for their own use, such ideas and forms as pleased them most. Horses at once became a part of native folklore and art, and angels took on every color and variety of Indian form and costume, both natural and supernatural. The multi-colored wings and garlands of fruits given them in, for instance, the wonderful little church of Santa Maria Tonantzintla, is one of the many instances of the kind of adoption, with zest, that went on.

We thought it would be of great interest to our readers to see how alive angels can be; and of very immediate

interest also to our own angel, Angus, who as our regular readers know flits occasionally through our pages looking for Mexican fun. From time to time somebody writes us a letter and asks us about that little man with the halo who writes that column, or engages in



other more spectacular feats with sombreros, pyramids, tequila and wistful hoopla.

Generally we refer them to our first issue, where it was explained that Angus, once upon a time, was a book-keeper in New Jersey, who used to spend his lunch hours in a travel agency, reading booklets about far-romantic places, including and especially, Mexico. But he died doing his duty and so didn't get to make those trips in his lifetime, hence, the first thing he did in nightgown, harp and wings was to start off for Mexico.

He used to come down regularly for the fiesta seasons, but, there being so many of them, he finally decided it would be simpler just to stay. He writes the column in the guise of a



local business leader who is generally known as a very solid man and sharp executive.

The kuklux-type drawings on this page are not, however, angels nor Anguses. They're our art staff's solemn commentary on the big political news

of the day, which is the final unmasking of The Man who for the past few months has been known as "the covered up one" (*El Tapado*). The covered-up-one generally refers to something that goes on in cockfights, when there's one being entered — and bet on sight unseen.

In this year's pre-election sieving and conferring, consulting and counting, starting from the grass-roots and taking in most of the population by the time it's over (the leading party includes the immense majority of voters) the race started off with about eight favorite sons, and they were very manly contenders indeed, or good roosters if you want to put it that way. Indeed,

most of the contenders were and are tough candidates to contend against, being top-quality folks in their records with not much exception.

It was considered bad form, politically, and the word was so passed, to talk of the Tapado, speculate, take bets, name names, etcetera, as it was felt too much electioneering too far ahead of time would make for waste of executive hours and restlessness. Now that names have been named by the Party, with the other, so far, parties not very enthusiastic about naming contestants, the game is almost not worth the candle except for the sake of gubernatorial, senatorial, and suchlike coups, the question nevertheless is how's it going to go, it being not at all mechanically set ahead of time, as many

people seem to believe Mexican elections are. They're anything but mechanical, we assure you. So from where the Tapado sits — or stands or troupes in the beginning of his campaigning, the Tapados would seem to be the rest of the nation. See? Cute, aren't we.

News and Comment

presidential candidate

On November 17 the PRI, Mexico's most powerful political party, proclaimed Lic. Adolfo López Mateos its candidate for President during 1958-64 term. The undisputed supremacy of the PRI (Partido Revolucionario Institucional) makes the victory of its candidate almost a sure thing, but in the case of Lic. López Mateos there is the clinching factor of tremendous personal popularity and a universal respect for his talents and intellect.

He was Minister of Labor in President Ruiz Cortines' cabinet right up until the day he was proclaimed official candidate, and he quietly supervised labor mediations so effectively that there was not one major strike during his term in office. The minimum wage rate was raised nationwide. Working conditions generally were improved. And he accomplished all this without losing the respect or friendship of either the labor union groups or employers, which together now form his strongest support.

Apparently a dark horse in the presidential candidate race until the very last moment, precisely because he never sought publicity, he was nevertheless the most likely candidate in the opinion of experienced observers of Mexican politics because he united all the necessary qualifications: (1) — He has worked closely with the present President in the formulation and execution of major Mexican domestic policies; (2) — He has not created a tremendous partisan following and its necessary result — a group violently opposed to him. This leaves him pretty well free to make his own way; (3) — Age, — he is just 47, and for the most part Mexico has had young



Photo Ruiz.

López Mateos campaigns

presidents — so much so that there are now 5 living ex-presidents; (4) — Despite his youth he has had a long political career, beginning at 19 when he first took active part in a national election; (5) — He does not violate the tradition that since the early 1920's there have been no President without an "1" in their names.

And it is not to be denied that Lic. López Mateos is also an extremely attractive man — with dark wavy hair just beginning to grey at the temples, brown eyes and an extraordinary warmth of manner. And this is the first time that Mexican women will be allowed to vote in a national election.

A brief resume of his vital statistics: Born in Atizapán de Zaragoza, in the State of Mexico, a small town of about 4,000. His relatives, particularly maternal, were noted intellectuals, writers and teachers, all strongly patriotic. His mother, widowed early, was also a teacher. López Mateos distinguished himself in school by his outstanding oratory, leadership qualities, striking

good looks and an ease of manner and friendliness notable in an adolescent. He has not forgotten old friends and delights in reminiscing about student days.

A lawyer, he started his legal career in the District Attorney's office of the State of Mexico. He has been both deputy and senator from the State of Mexico; rector of the college of the State of Mexico, with a scholastic emphasis on history and economics. He has represented Mexico in foreign service, in Geneva, and at the UN.

López Mateos has just finished a new home near University City, modern, comfortable, with a tremendous library, where he lives with his wife, (a teacher who worked at her profession until 5 years ago) and their 16-year old daughter. Traffic has become so heavy around there lately that it takes 6 traffic policemen to keep the road clear and the well-wishers in order. As for his few moments of relaxation López Mateos used to climb mountains and he was a great walker. (He and a group of friends once walked from Mexico City to Guatemala in 17 days). Now there is no time nor energy left over for that, so he has turned to canasta and boxing — purely as a spectator sport.

What little free time and relative anonymity he has had until now as a cabinet minister has evaporated in the political glare surrounding him as the No. 1 Presidential candidate. And from now until the July 6th elections he will be touring the Republic shaking hands and kissing babies.

all clear in mazatlán

Mazatlan, which was hit hard by a hurricane on October 21, is now back in business. All transportation services were operating just a few days after the big blow, and the hotels are now completely repaired. The deep-sea fishing tournaments went ahead as scheduled during November and two more are planned for Spring of 1958. The Southern California Tuna Club Tournament, April 24 to 29; and the 13th International Light Tackle Tournament, April 26 to May 4. Also on the docket for Spring are the Pre-Lent and Holy Week Festivities, February 14 to 18 and March 30 to April 5.



in december

Poinsett as U.S. Secretary of War 1837

MR. POINSETT AND HIS POINSETTIAS

By Elga Larraide

Did you know that the poinsettia was discovered in Mexico and named after the colorful and provocative American diplomat who brought it home to Charleston? Here is an interesting account, from a Mexican point of view, of Mr. Poinsett.

In South America people called him "The Scourge of the Continent", in the United States he was an aristocratic Southerner and a friend of presidents; in Mexico he was hooted and stoned by the populace. This man of such contrasting qualities achieved what he set out to do by the sheer force of his magnetic personality. Yet his name would be unknown today were it not for the fact that this

(Continued on page 24)

Photos Marilu Pease



by Toss Olsen

For weeks sleek new buses with banners advertising round trip excursions to Los Angeles had been parked along Mexico City's busy Paseo de la Reforma and airlines were making special rates for the same trip. Publicity minded businesses were rewarding outstanding employees with round trip tickets, all expenses paid. It seemed as if half of Mexico was going to Wrigley Field in Los Angeles to see a 23-year old youth fight for the championship of the world.

Few people have captured the imagination of the Mexican people as has the quiet little fighter who used his fists to shake himself loose from boyhood squalor and poverty. It is not just matter of identification with the rags-to-riches hero, for this man did not

RATON RETURNS WITH MOUSE

shake off his friends with his poverty. When he is in Mexico he will be shooting a game of pool with his friends of the old neighborhood or loafing at a corner stand eating a taco and joking with the wide-eyed kids who know a hero when they see one.

His name is Raúl Macías, but he is always called *El Ratón*. It means Mouse and was hung on him by a fight crowd when at the age of 12, weighing 68 pounds, he suddenly darted between the legs of his 180-pound opponent and attacked him from the rear. The delighted crowd applauded. Someone yelled that he darted around

Photos Mayo





Photos Mayo

He has suits and ties but prefers informal and fancy sport shirts.



Ratón goes along with a gag and cuts the hair of his old friend, the neighborhood barber.



Photo Hector Garza

The pesos roll in and the 23 year-old needs office and calculator.

like a mouse; the crowd took up the cry — and the boy took up the profession of boxing. It has rewarded him richly. And he has used his money wisely. He has money invested in a thriving soft drink company and owns half interest in a large farm managed by the son of his business manager, Luis Andrade.

Ratón's first fight was against hunger. One of 13 children, he knew what a 12-hour work-day was before most boys realize that mowing a front lawn is not slave labor. And yet he found time and energy to learn to box. With-

in a few years he was on the Mexican Olympic Boxing Team at Helsinki where he missed winning a gold medal by a contested decision.

On his return to Mexico the quiet young man began his professional career and in 1953 he became Mexican Bantamweight Champion. A few fights later he was declared N.B.A. World Champion by default when Champion Robert Cohen took too long in meeting one of the top challengers.

Ratón Macías has had 38 fights and lost two of them. The first broke his

jaw in two places and the second broke his heart. On last October 9 a record crowd jammed Wrigley Field to see N.B.A. Champion, Ratón Macías, fight the man recognized as World Bantamweight Champion by other Associations, rugged little Alphonse Halimi. Enormous crowds of Mexican fight fans crossed the U.S. border to see their idol win. They came with banners and placards and even with cheer leaders from the University of Mexico. And with a violently impartial crowd

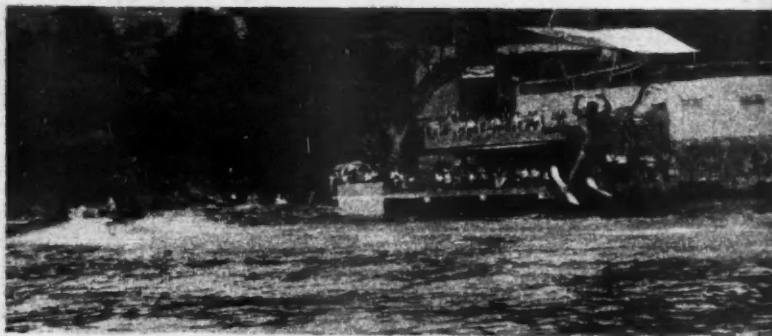
(Continued on page 28)



Ratón still lives in Tepito, a tough section of Mexico City where a boy learns to fight early in life. Photo at right: "Cock of the Walk."



You can fly your kite, but watch out for gravity!



waterskiing in the winter sun

By Paula Landau

Winter sports? Or a place in the sun? These days you can have both. Quietly tuck your skis (snow, that is) into a closet and head for Lake Tequesquitengo — an hour and a half from Mexico City — where you can enjoy the balmy sun of a semi-tropical climate along with that aching muscles sensation indispensable to any vacation.

Or, for an ocean vacation, hop a plane that takes an hour from

(Continued on page 23)

Photos Hotel Tequesquitengo



[Top and bottom] The casual note. On your head or with a girl in your arms.



Look, ma, no hands! It might be better to practice this one in some private spot.

Photo Otto Done



Photo Marilu Pense

Children

Three little angels: One of them is at school in Jocotepec. The other two squat happily in costume for Corpus Christi festivities and if their halos are a bit sticky from chocolate who cares?

By Elena Martínez Tamayo

Angels are pure spirits created by God. The angels who remain faithful to their creator enjoy eternal happiness, but the rebellious ones are hurled down to hell to become devils or fallen angels. They were not known here until the arrival of Catholicism. The Indians believed in a paradise populated by those who had served God or sacrificed themselves to him and as a reward enjoyed eternal happiness. In Teotihuacán you can see a mural depicting the Indian Paradise of *Tlalocan*, (see MTM July, 1956).

The Spaniards brought with them the cross and other religious symbols that have been woven into the country's culture. The angel is frequently shown as a physical support in the painting, sculpture and architecture of the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, simultaneously symbolizing the idea of spiritual support. This dual conception is beautifully represented in the angel that supports the Virgin of Guadalupe, patron saint of Mexico, and in sculpture and architecture, crosses, bases of columns, baptistries, baptismal fonts, choir lofts, altars, pulpits, fountains, crypts, facades of churches, etc. Sometimes they are merely small ornamental details, sometimes they acquire functional purpose as part of the structure; again they may be great sculptures projecting from, embedded in the structure, or separate like the magnificent colonial icons.

The Spaniards used many of the great Indian sculptors, teaching them to copy from European models — but they couldn't stamp out the Indian spirit and many of these "copies" are

Ocotlán, Tlaxcala; Tepoztlán, Morelos, and in a great number of cathedrals, churches, monasteries, palaces and colonial buildings of cities such as Mexico, Querétaro, Taxco, Guanajuato, Zacatecas, Oaxaca, San Luis Potosí, Puebla (which, incidentally, is popularly known as the City of the Angels), Guadalajara, Morelia and other major cities of the Republic.

It is impossible to cover all the important angels in sculpture, painting and architecture; but at least one can touch on some of the most characteristic.

The baptismal font of the church of San Juan Evangelista in Acatzingo,

Puebla, bears a stone angel whose feature are totally Indian. (1574). The multi-colored, stuccoed angels in the beautiful church of Santo Domingo in Oaxaca (1600) are great renaissance-type sculptures in wood.

The mural that decorates the chapel of San Miguel Toliman in Querétaro

shows angels completely Indian, not only in some details but in their entirety, and with surprising freshness and ingenuity. On the church walls, painted in tones of terra cotta and blue, are Indians with scanty loin-cloths and odd wings. Others are wearing stiffly full short skirts that look as though made of paper. Some Indian angels are blowing on horns or playing flutes. (1862).

Florid angels of Spanish Renaissance type can be seen in Yurriaria and Acolman; of heavily ornate or Churrigueresque style in Santa Prisca, Taxco, and baroque in exuberant colors at Santa María Tonantzintla, Puebla. The church of Santa María Tonantzintla (1690) is, according to Aldous Huxley, "probably the most extraordinary church in Christendom." Baroque in style with a particularly Mexican feeling and expression, it is decorated with a luminous fantasy in which gold and stucco are combined with a blaze of brilliant blues, yellows, reds and greens, with the purest baroque Mexican angels forming a part of this magnificent spectacle.

A small picture in this church inspired Mexican Ballet Bancer José Limón to create a dance evoking the colonial forms, but without a trace of affectation. The story told in the picture is very simple: on the day dedi-

(Continued on page 16)



KEY TO MEXICAN ANGELS on pages 14 and 15

1 — Paper angel from Toluca. 2 — Angel, altar of Sto. Domingo church Oaxaca. 3 — Angel, MTM's guardian angel. 4 — Pottery angel, in buff & terra cotta, Guerrero. 5 — Type of angel which appears in religious paintings. 6 — Black pottery angel, Oaxaca. 7 — Angel carved in stone, N.E. Posa, Monastery of San Miguel Huejotzingo, Puebla. 8 — Tin angel, Taxco. 9 & 10 — Figures, mural in Church of San Miguel Toliman, Querétaro. 11 — Carving on baptismal font, Church of San Juan Evangelista, Acatzingo, Puebla. 12 — Straw angel from Michoacán.

and Angels

basically Indian in character and feeling. Magnificent examples can be seen in the angels that decorate San Agustín Acolman, Atzacualco, Tepoztlán, in the State of Mexico; San Miguel Huejotzingo, San Andrés Calpan, Santa María Tonantzintla, Cholula, etc., in the State of Puebla; as well as in





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CHILDREN and ANGELS

(Continued from page 13)

cated to the Archangel Michael the four angels in the picture come down to dance and enjoy themselves in a fiesta of their own. The marvelous color and plastic feeling of the work was absorbed by Limón who created out of it an authentic Mexican dance based on the purest baroque emotion.

Another magnificent example of baroque, but this one of classic lines, is the Chapel of the Angels in the Cathedral of Mexico, which corresponds to the first half of the 17th century.

In this century, the extra-terrestrial quality identified with the angel has evolved into the more human, more real quality — as it became part of Mexican popular art.

In Oaxaca, and in the rest of Mexico on the Day of the Dead (Nov. 1. See MTM, November), it is the custom to make oval breads and cakes with little heads of angels and half wings. Oaxaca also has the unique black clay out of which are made the black angels with large wings and long braids that hang to their waists. Among these angels are some with one "fallen" wing — a wing drooping lower than the other. Possibly these represent the devils or fallen angels in Catholic doctrine, or just sad angels. It is a common Mexican saying that when something bad happens to a person or he is sad, "he goes with a fallen wing".

Speaking of the black angels, one mustn't forget the song that criticizes artists who only paint white angels: "All the good black angels go to heaven too," it says.

The angels made in the village of Metepec, famous for ceramics, are portrayed in gay colors that it is customary to call "Indian shades" — rose, blue, orange, yellow, etc.

Almost all of the ceramic centers make angels that differ from each other in style and are easily identifiable. In some parts of Mexico there



Photo Museo Arte Popular

A black Oaxaca angel, drooping one wing in sorrow.

are angels which are peculiarly characteristic, such as those made around Acapulco which have a little cap and a little wing held in front of the face — perhaps to protect themselves from the strong sun.

Many materials are used to make the little folk-art angels. In Michoacán, for example, they are made entirely of straw or reed. In Toluca, the State of Mexico, for the Day of the Dead, figures of solid wood or papier maché are dressed in lovely paper dresses; while in Mexico City and other places they are cut from paper like paper dolls. Metal centers like Mexico City and Taxco are famous for beautiful silver, copper and tin angels

which are sold all over the world. These are also used at Christmas as candle holders.

The angels also hold an important place in painting. Besides the church decorations, there are the popular "miracle paintings" on tin, hung in many homes. Eugenio Servín, young Tarascan artist who paints angels professionally, does work clearly derivative from the elaborations in popular arts or from their original Indian sources.

For Christmas decorations and cards, many artists paint or draw "angelitos" with the faces of Indian children. Angels of diverse forms and materials are also used to adorn Christmas crèches.

The angels also have their "days". In the early times of the Catholic Church the month of October was dedicated to them. On August 2 everyone pays homage to Our Lady of the Angels; September 29, to all the angels associated with the Archangel Michael, and November 1 is dedicated to the memory of the little dead angels. (When a baby dies in Mexico it is believed he goes directly to heaven to become an "angelito").

The symbol of liberty in Mexico is a giant gilded angel with outspread wings on top of a high column. When this famous figure crashed to the ground a few months ago during an earthquake, it was said that the people "went into mourning." The town was badly shocked and upset by the sight of their symbol of liberty lying broken on the street. Thousands gathered and stood around it silently. Fortunately the government has gone to work on its restoration with great energy and very shortly the Angel's wings will be flung out to the wind again.

Mexicans say that agreeable people for whom everything goes well "tiene ángel".



Photo Nacho Lopez



Photo Delta Airlines

Sad eyed burros loaded with firewood make room for little hitch-hikers.

No small boy would miss taking his pet rooster to be blessed on St. Anthony's day.

It takes a lot of washing to keep little girls clean and starched and full of spice.

Photo Marilu Pease



Three diminutive charros watch another keep a halo of rope firm in the air.



Diplomatic mission

the benjamin franklin library



Most of the library's helpful staff are bilingual.

Best known, most popular of the U.S.'s many facets of good neighborliness, the Benjamin Franklin Library in Mexico has made thousands of friends and well-wishers for the American people.

If some day a wave of nostalgia sweeps over you and you want a glimpse of home, you will find a friendly building at Niza 53, just two blocks from the Paseo de la Reforma, that will refresh your spirits and recall your home town and the shade of Andrew Carnegie.

Over the doorway is a stone carving of the Great Seal of the United States

and inside you breathe the atmosphere of the American Public Library The Benjamin Franklin Library, locally abbreviated to "The BBF", lends books, has a reference department and offers many other services. Through the years, since its founding in 1942, the BBF has ministered to the needs of Mexicans and Americans. Although its purpose is to interpret the United States to Mexico, like the American free public library it is open to all. Its staff has many tales to tell of service outside the normal course of bibliographical events. Once an eager American couple mistook the seal for that of a consul or ship's captain and hurried into the BBF for a wedding ceremony. Nothing loth the librarian on duty called a Mexican judge, subpoenaed a few bridesmaids and witnesses, and the wedding was performed forthwith in the department of Extension Services. On another occasion a young girl, a *charro* vendor, was heard weeping on the library steps. She had lost her day's profits and was afraid to go home. Fifteen minutes later she was on her way, happy with a collection taken up for her by the staff.

Like all public libraries the BBF has its assiduous readers. One was a very elderly retired mining engineer whose attendance coincided with the BBF's 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. hours Monday to Friday, Saturdays until 2:00 p.m. He had his favorite corner and did not welcome sharing his easy chair. His nationality was always a mystery, but the seriousness with which he read every book received about Communism in the Iron-Curtain countries indicated an unhappy past somewhere in Europe. In his last illness one of the library pages used to carry him library books, after working hours. The story-book ending would be that he left a fortune to the page



Mexicans as well as Americans come to seek information here.

or to the BBF. Not true, but he did leave a considerable sum to the Red Cross.

The most appreciated service at the Benjamin Franklin Library is the lending of books for home use. Borrowing from a library, so familiar in the United States, is almost unknown in Mexico. Mexican librarians are strict custodians of knowledge and books must be used on the premises. Other U.S. routines are reserving books by leaving a post card and (human nature being what it is) collecting fines for overdue books. In the U.S. fines usually go to the municipal dog pound

Photos U.S. Information Service



Above: Getting the library habit young.
Below: This book locker will go to a Mexican school.



Students use the large catalog for reference.

while BBF fines go to the U.S. Treasury and are undoubtedly cutting down quite a hunk of the National Debt! As there is no city directory in Mexico, in order to obtain a library card borrowers are asked to name a reference, who will presumably be able to locate them. If they know no one in Mexico, they may leave 50 pesos deposit in lieu of a guarantor's name.

The Benjamin Franklin Library has a Children's Room with a weekly story hour and book talks. Almost any day you may see a bubbling bus load of school-uniformed children lining up to visit the BBF. Sometimes they discuss books in Spanish, sometimes in English, according to the wishes of the teacher or group.

The Reference Department answers about 3,500 question a month and prepares bibliographies on many erudite subjects, such as "The Sulphate process for the obtention of cellulose", or, "Laws pertaining to the rehabilitation of the physically handicapped."

Among its most interesting telephone calls have been one from the ABC Hospital requesting a book with names for twins and an anguished call from a suburban householder asking how to

(Continued on page 28)



Easy to see why this lovely lady is nicknamed "Marlene."
Below: Silent witnesses to the past of Acapulco.



Photos A. Von Wuthenau



This regal "prince" — the lady's consort?

By Dr. Alejandro Von Wuthenau *

Mexico — land of ancient cultures and buried civilizations — has just turned up one of the most complex and exciting of the "lost cities" barely a stone's throw from Acapulco. Accidental discovery of the "pretty ladies", small figurines of beautiful women, led to the unearthing of the undreamed of ruins of La Sabana, near the port of Acapulco.

These ruins, which consist at present of shapeless mounds, are being preserved by the government for further excavations. Scattered among the ruins are enormous rocks on which the primitive inhabitants left mysterious and, so far, unexplained symbols. A large stone, for example, bears numerous engraved calendar-like symbols, one of which is a cross and another a flower with four leaves and with a cross in its center. This latter motif is repeated in various of the petroglyphs.

The earliest constructions at La Sabana date back to the end of the pre-classic period, more than 2000 years ago. The petroglyphs were left by these

* Dr. Von Wuthenau, art historian of Mexico City College and authority on church architecture, is preparing a book on the Guerrero cultures. We have asked him to give us a preview of a few of his findings. Anyone wishing more information may contact him through Mexico/This Month, or Asociación Interamericana de Orientación y Conservación de Arte, A.C., Calle Ferrocarril del Valle No. 8, San Angel, D.F., México.

PRETTY LADIES OF ACAPULCO



An expectant mother. Perhaps a fertility amulet.

early peoples, and the ceramics indicate that the culture lasted for centuries ending just before the coming of the Spaniards. The inhabitants were influenced by other groups. Some pieces strongly resemble the work that came out of the Teotihuacán culture and numbers of small Toltec-type clay heads have been found.

The photographs shown with this article illustrate a new segment in the mosaic of pre-Columbian cultures. The figurines were all found on the West Coast of the State of Guerrero, the majority in the vicinity of Acapulco. These little clay heads (*idolitos*) and potsherds (*tepalcates*) indicate the possibility of European and Asian con-

tacts with the pre-Colombian peoples. Many of the figurines are markedly similar to pre-Hellenic, Hittite, Asiatic, and other foreign artifacts. Some of the figurines bear an astonishing similarity to the stone idols of Easter Island. Especially startling is the appearance of European features in this purely Indian art. Future excavations may unfold an incredible page of unwritten history.

The "pretty ladies" (*mujeres bonitas* as they are known in Mexican archaeology) are remarkable in their conformance to modern western beauty standards. Of course, the usual crude artifact with its misshapen ugliness (to our eyes) would strike a jarring note in a glamour hangout like Acapulco. But who would expect to have beautiful women like "Her Majesty Marlene I of Acapulco" turn up to fit in so well with the present modern lavish resort surroundings. It was the chance discovery of these charming figurines that led the writer and other authorities to delve into La Sabana. Even the comparatively little work done so far indicates that the culture was not only pre-classic but probably continued up until Aztec times — making it rather an archaeological heaven. So much so that fences have been erected to prevent collectors and tourists from picking up precious "souvenirs".

Portrait of a maiden.



Obviously a lady of quality.



Another pretty lass of the past.





All day long you think of numbers



Do it yourself



The theory of relativity is easier

how to win the national lottery

by Toss Olsen

There are several ways of winning lotteries. Some are better than others. Some are also more honest. This is to be desired for the Mexican lottery is a national institution and the government takes umbrage with those who frivolously paste winning numbers over losing ones. The officials also deal harshly with happy-go-lucky citizens who amuse their friends by selling them lottery tickets almost as well printed as the ones that the national lottery presses are turning out.

The straightforward approach has merit. And of course the scientific study offers a challenge to the dedicated man who wants no reward other than money. However, the ranks of the lottery players are no more free of a lunatic fringe than are its sister sciences. There are people who simply walk up to a vender or one of the little lottery stores and buy a ticket. Any ticket! A real player would no more accept money won in this slipshod manner than a hunter would shoot a bird on the ground. These people should be denied the lottery. They are not even dilettantes.

How different the professional! Hawkeye never tracked a savage through endless swamp with more skill or enthusiasm than does the seasoned lottery player search out the fated ticket. No mathematician ever ruined more table cloths. They all play hard, giving the game all that they have. But not all play the same way. There are different schools.

In the largest group is the casual number man. He adds casual numbers all day long. His age, a license plate, the first telephone number he called and his girl's given age are totalled. Then he usually divides by a significant number. This result is frequently too high and the investigator must

shut his eyes and cross one number out. This system leaves something to be desired, along with a lot of scrap paper.

Dreams about numbers are popular. During a drab black and white movie a sudden burst of vibrating red in the form of a number alerts the sleeper who leaps out of bed and races to the nearest *expedient* to find the winning number. Usually he finds that the next lottery is two days distant and that the number he dreamed won last week's lottery.

The hunch player is winning more and more reknown. Much of this is due to the influence of the "let your sub-conscious go" school. An example of this type would be the man who buys a ticket ending in 44 because he has just been to a triple feature movie starring various six shooters.

The most touching players, the ones made of sterner stuff are those who day after day, snow or sleet, buy the same number. They buy and wait patiently for the big one. Somehow the only stories that circulate about these people usually concern a huge prize won by that ticket on the one day old faithful forgot to buy it.

Actually there are as many types of players as there are tickets. One of our press men plays on the big million dollar-plus lottery on each September 16 for, as he says, "What good would it do a man with delicate tastes like mine to win a smaller one?" A spirit like that can not be beaten by mere number manipulation and *esprit de corps* is just as important as the system. After all there are only nine numbers and a zero to choose from and from then on out it is a simple matter of arrangement. Although our accountant, a sadly practical man, says that only two things are needed to win the lottery: A ticket and luck.

That may be. However, this way makes no provision for losing and who wants to lose without flourishes or elaborately laid plans? The winners can crack jokes but the losers need a system to start on after the wrong numbers turn up. Pick any one of the above and use it as if it were yours alone. Or use mine. I can't recommend it too highly.



A flash in the night



No system, no style

waterskiing

(Continued from page 11)

Mexico City to land you in Acapulco (about 6 hours by car or bus).

Waterskiing is one of the few "thrill" sports involving almost no risk and easy to learn. Instead of huddling before a fire with a sprained ankle, skim across the surface of a smooth lake doing the stunts you stared at open-mouthed a week ago — with no more damage than a mouthful or two of water. Nothing matches the sensation of whizzing along the water with the wind in your face.

Anyone can do it — some youngsters ski before they learn to walk, and age is no bar. Waterskiing probably has the highest learning curve of any sport. People have jumped from double skills to the graceful slalom in a single day and one lass is showing off her talents in the Acapulco ski exhibition after a month's practice. An added lure is the low cost — no equipment to buy — your skills come along with the boat and instructor at about \$5 to \$7 an hour.

The "getting up" stage (the process of learning how to let the boat pull you up so you can stand on the water) would provide a good comic sequence for those home movies! But the competent instructors at ski resorts ski next to you and literally take you up the first few times until your muscles know what to do without direction. Secret: Let the boat do it and don't try to be helpful! Next step — tricks. It is almost impossible for anyone elated with the power of speeding over the water behind a fast boat to resist the temptation to try out the stunts he's seen in the ski shows. Especially once he's found out that the falls don't hurt. You'll be surprised to find out how easy some of the stunts are once you get balance and confidence.

Not all of them, of course. It might be wise to restrain yourself from jumping the ramp the first week, and you might find it a little difficult to ski without skills. But you can get quite a kick out of doing a turn neatly poised on one toe in the "swan" for the edification of spectators who don't know about that learning curve and are wasting their time loitering around in the sun.

(Note: Put on an extra lather of sun lotion. The sun reflected off the water has an extra kick.)

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Sanborns

poinsettias

(Continued from page 9)

same name has been immortalized by a flower.

Writer, diplomat, world-wide traveler, idealist, and the first man to import the "Poinsettia", Joel Roberts Poinsett, the first ambassador of the United States to the Mexican Republic, was indeed a man of many facets.

In 1825, after a "mission" to South America, during which his open criticism and mixing into local politics won him attacks as a "Scourge of the Continent", and a later similar expedition to Mexico, Poinsett was appointed United States Minister and Envoy Extraordinary to Mexico. The pseudo-Emperor Iturbide had been shot the year before and Mexico was again a Republic. James Monroe had launched the Monroe Doctrine two years before, a message which made Europe and all the Americas sit up and take notice, and Poinsett's patriotism and loyalty to his country were inflamed by the message it carried.

President Guadalupe Victoria did not welcome Poinsett with the cordiality the diplomat anticipated. No doubt the President was not eager to meet a "Scourge of the Continent". Moreover, Poinsett almost upon his arrival in Mexico, and with shrewd intent, established the York Masonic Rite, known in Spanish as "Rito Yorkino," and used it for political purposes. The Scottish Rite had been introduced in Mexico some time before, but now Poinsett began pitting one lodge against the other. Most of the Mexican Masons of the period were men who belonged either to the Conservative or to the Liberal party — important men — and the fact that both Lodges vied against each other brewed discontent. Mexico is and always has been a Catholic country since the conquest and the Church objected to Poinsett's Masonic activities. The power that the lodges were acquiring turned public opinion against him.

A very short while later the Charlestonian found himself involved in international affairs. The frontier with Mexico was a delicate question at the time. Poinsett, like Monroe, did not believe in European aggression, yet the idea of annexing Texas to the United States seemed reasonable to him. He wrote Van Buren, then Secretary of State, saying that he thought the negotiations could be carried out though it might

provoke a war. Later on, through Poinsett, Andrew Jackson offered the Mexican government \$5,000,000 for the acquisition of Texas, Mexico, of course, refused.

These contrivings created greater difficulties between the two nations. The eyes of Europe were upon them, and the English Charge d'Affaires wrote in one of his letters to Parliament: "Poinsett's mission consists of embroiling Mexico in a civil war in order to obtain for the U.S. all the provinces north of the Rio Grande."

While the bickering was going on, Vicente Guerrero was elected President of Mexico. The new president and Poinsett became fast friends. Other ambitious politicians wine and dined the diplomat, discussing politics and the future of Mexico with him. The flattery went to his head like sparkling wine. Perhaps he boasted too much or people's tongues began to wag. In any case, Poinsett's prestige dropped like a ball of lead. In December 1827 a riotous crowd gathered in front of his house. The mob threw stones and broke windows. The shout was the same as the one in Chile several years before. "Fuera Poinsett!" (Out with Poinsett!)

Yet apart from politics, Poinsett had time to write and study the life and the customs of Mexico almost on a par with Baron Von Humboldt whom he much admired. The diplomat wandered through the markets, mixed with the people, went to their fiestas, seeing, hearing, feeling his way around. He loved nothing better than to putter about the flowerbeds of his country home in Cuernavaca. But of all the flowers he cultivated he was particularly attached to the Mexican species of Euphorbia, the flowering shrub with scarlet bracts which the Mexicans call *Flor de Noche Buena* (Christmas Flower). When he returned to his home in South Carolina he "introduced the plant to horticulture in the United States and a few years later botanists gave it the name of 'Poinsettia Pulcherrima' in his honor." It was his Excellency's best message from Mexico to the United States.

Poinsett died in South Carolina on December 12, 1851 of that incipient tuberculosis which had harassed him all his life. His errors were many but they are now forgotten, and his name remains linked with one beautiful flower that year by year brings Christmas happiness in many lands.

NIGHT SPOTS



From December 16 to 24, inclusive, all of the capital's night clubs will present the traditional Mexican *posadas*. In addition to the regularly scheduled floor shows, there will be special Christmas festivities — *piñatas* with a profusion of serpentinas, confetti, whistles, festive caps and similar gadgets.

On Christmas Eve, the gaiety will reach its peak, with holiday foods and special floor shows. December 28, the Day of the Innocents, is the Mexican version of April Fool's Day, with appropriate activities in the night spots. And in all of the city's clubs, bars and restaurants, the New Year will be ushered in with unrestrained joy and hilarity.

Flamingos. On Insurgentes just past Ciudad de los Deportes. Main attraction is French singer Mona Baptiste. Minimum.

Afro. In the Hotel Plaza Vistahermosa. Night club with tropical atmosphere and Afro-Cuban music. Two shows nightly with the Cuban singer, Celia Cruz, outstanding interpreter of folkloric songs. No minimum.

El Eco. Sullivan 43. Name your jazz and it's there. Dixieland, New Orleans, bebop, rock and roll and Afro-Cuban. No minimum.

Capri. Hotel Regis. Night club with international atmosphere. Floor show features the famous Cubans "Cuarteto Ruffo". Two orchestras: Américo Caggiano and Fernando Guarneros. Minimum.

Picos Pardos. Dinamarca 13. Romantic Veracruz music at its best.

Hotel Bamer. Juárez 52. In the restaurant-bar; every night you can listen to singer Evelyn Conde.

Hotel Insurgentes. On Insurgentes, about 3 blocks past Ciudad de los Deportes. On each side of the hotel are night spots with good food and all types of music.

Our own Directory

INFORMATION SERVICES

A. M. A. (Asociación Mexicana Automovilística). Berlin 6. Reciprocal courtesies to members. In case of emergency, call 35-27-35.

American Embassy. Reforma and Lafragua. Tel. 46-94-00.

American Society. Lucerna 71. Tel. 46-46-20.

A. N. A. (Asociación Nacional Automovilística). Sullivan 51. Affiliated with A. A. A. Services both to members and non-members. Emergency phone number: 35-03-43.

Benjamin Franklin Library. Niza 53. Central Balneológica, San Juan de Le-trán 24 Free information on Mexican spas and health resorts.

Mexico City Daily Bulletin. Gómez Farías 41. Tel. 16-69-60. General tourist information.

Mexican-North American Cultural Institute. Hamburgo 115. Tel. 25-16-54, 25-16-55, 25-16-56.

National Tourist Department. Juárez 89. General travel information.

PEMEX Travel Club. Juárez 89. Highway information. Publishes an excellent auto travel bulletin in English.

The News. Morelos 4. Tel. 21-23-35, 46-69-04, 46-68-40. Worldwide and Mexican news, with U.P. AP, INS coverage, US columnists and comics.

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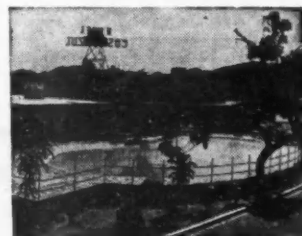
Now is the time for all good men to pass the bottle around, and Mexico has a great variety to pass around.

First, there are the fine rums turned out by Bacardí in their distillery here, one of the most modern in Latin America. You pay your money and takes home with you whatever kind most appeals to your palate at from \$.80 to \$1.25 a bottle. Carta Blanca young, blond and light; Carta Oro, a little more mature with a rich golden color, or Añejo, the dark old man of rums. If your palate isn't quite sure, trot it over to the Bacardí bottling plant, Cedro 380, and regale it with free samples from 12 to 3 — after which it may be incapable of making any decisions. You may want to delve into the business even more thoroughly with an investigatory trip through La Galarza, the Bacardí finca near Puebla, Latin America's largest distillery, which can be arranged for

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rum in a straw-wrapped jug for about
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Tequila, which is the new thing in
dry, dry martinis, also varies in age.
It is purely a matter of taste between
the sharp, white Tequila or the aged,
yellow Añejo, as both have distinctive
flavor. Prices range between \$.75 and
\$1.25 a fifth. The traditional manner
of imbibing is with salt and lemon,
but Tequila is eminently adaptable to
such things as Collins, punch, and
cocktails.

A Tequila liqueur is *Tequila de pe-
chuga almendrado* — just what it says,



tequila put to age with chicken breasts
and almonds. Be careful, it still kicks.

Mezcal is as inherent a part of Mex-
ico as its fiestas and burros. As a mat-
ter of fact, no fiesta is complete un-
less the Mezcal bottle is passed around.
One of the strongest drinks concocted
by man (more than holds its own with
the Italian Grappa) with a unique
flavor, it is nevertheless smooth and
rich. (Unless you come across one of
the local varieties where the accent
is on kick and never mind the refine-
ments!). One of the finest is *Mezcal
de Olla*, which comes in a beautiful
ceramic jar which you can keep as de-
coration. *Gusano Rojo* has also been
smoothed down but is still a sipping
drink. It is, incidentally, accompanied
by the worm whose name it bears and
a small package of "worm salt." Don't
let this give you pause, however. It is
not necessary to eat the worm. He
stays in the bottle until the last drink
and you can carefully select the reci-
pient. The salt, on the other hand, is
locally considered a necessary fillip.

You can give your Christmas Day
eggnog party a special flavor by us-
ing *Ronpope*, a rich eggnog liberally
mixed with rum. It comes thick or

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thin and with or without cinnamon. The adventurous may decide to explore the *Nativo* — a jigger of gin, ice, lemon twist and cinnamon in a tall glass filled with *Ronpope*. Red or green straws blend in nicely. This is one of the smoothest and deceptively innocuous tasting drinks so it is advisable to make experimental attempts to stand after each round. A bottle costs between \$1 and \$1.25.

Mexico also turns out powerful brandy and cognac-like beverages. Among the best are the slightly sweet Mogavi, the drier Dorado and *Charanda* (aguardiente made from sugar cane).

If you are still with us, we will now go on to the milder varieties. *Kaymagui* is one of the best coffee liqueurs in the world and the only one made solely of a mixture of fine coffees. A spoonful of thick cream floating on the surface makes it an ambrosial after-dinner liqueur. At about \$1.40 a quart this is one of the best buys in Mexico.

You might also be interested in some of the exotic fruit liqueurs bottled by Manuel Sánchez in Tenancingo. In addition to orange, lime, creme de menthe, pineapple, cherry and coffee, he comes up with such oddities as guava, fig and quince. At 30 cents (U.S.) a bottle in Toluca or Tenancingo, you could walk away with a year's supply. Make a delicious Christmas punch with a bottle each of the pineapple and quince, a bottle of Vodka, a quart of orange juice, a cup of lime juice and sparkling water. Blackberry cordial and white wine over ice is a wonderful summer drink. And don't ignore the kitchen. After you've tried tangerine meringues and chiffon pie, blackberry or mint ice cream, you'll find yourself experimenting with many others.

Another traditional Mexican drink is Pulque — a milky liquid, slightly less potent than beer to allow for round-the-clock drinking. Its offbeat flavor is impossible to describe so you'll just have to find out for yourself. Comes plain or cured with brown sugar, celery or various fruits. It is best sampled in areas outside of Mexico City where the source of supply is sure — and pure. In Mexico City, it is fre-

quently adulterated and can cause serious gastric and intestinal disturbances.

Mexico has become one of the world leaders in beermaking since the middle of the last century. The Cuauhtemoc Brewery in the north makes light, sparkling beers, the most widely exported of which is *Carta Blanca*. *Bohemia*, a still paler beer, is one of the country's top favorites. The Moctezuma Brewery turns out a special brew of high alcoholic content only at Christmas time known as *Nochebuena* (Christmas Eve). The rest of the year it has its XX, a dark, heavy beer.

Yucatán ships outstanding light and dark beers to Mexico City. And if you can't decide between the two order a mug of *Campechana* in any restaurant that keeps beer on tap — you'll get a half and half mixture. So, you'd better incorporate the word *cerveza* (beer) into your Spanish vocabulary.

Mexico's Baja California wines are now being exported to the United States because of their high quality. The Saltillo and Aguascalientes wines, in red, white and rosé, are especially



good. Noblejo and San Pablo are the best of these.

Incidentally, red wine and lemon or lime ice is a famous cure for that ailment commonly known as "Turista." It is a psychic as well as physical cure — that is, at a certain point you don't care whether it works or not.

(Note: You are allowed to take a gallon of liquor to most states in the U.S. if you cross the border on any common carrier.)



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ratón returns with mouse

(Continued from page 10)

watching, Ratón Macías lost a close but eminently fair decision.

In Mexico people at their radios listened in stunned silence as Ratón tried to speak to his countrymen. Tried because he was crying. He felt that he had let Mexico down. No one ever wanted to win a fight more. That's one reason why people like the film star Mario Moreno "Cantinflas" and composer Agustín Lara flew to Los Angeles to cheer for him. And maybe that is also why a crowd of thousands of cheering people — some not even fight fans — met him at his homecoming at the Mexico City Airport. In defeat he gained a new respect. He was honest, and as direct as ever. When asked about his loss, Ratón said, "There was a better man in the ring." His statement was not quite accurate. There was a better fighter in the ring perhaps, but not a better man.

benjamin franklin library

(Continued from page 19)

get a swarm of bees out of the chimney.

Fifty per cent of the users of the BBF are Mexican students of university level and twenty eight per cent are professional people. Many of the latter have mentioned to the Librarian how much they appreciated finding expensive technical books at the BBF during their lean student days. When a new project is suggested for Mexico they still come to the BBF to learn what has been the experience of the U.S. in the field being investigated. If they need photostats of research materials unavailable in Mexico, or copies of patents, the BBF sends for them. The Library of Congress and other U.S. libraries lend their books generously to Mexicans via the Franklin Library.

In addition to its collection of 27,500 books in the capital, the Benjamin Franklin Library has branches in Guadalajara, Monterrey and Puebla. These

libraries provide the same services to their communities as does the parent organization. The Biblioteca Franklin — Guadalajara has just celebrated its eighth anniversary with a very successfully week of lectures, exhibits and other cultural events. All libraries present record concerts and film showings and make their resources available for community activities. They also cooperate with Mexican librarians in advising on library problems; many times the BBF Catalog Department resembles a seminar room, so animated are the discussions on how to catalog serials or why the Library of Congress Catalog does this or that.

The Benjamin Franklin Library lends by mail to any spot in the Republic of Mexico and sends rotating book collections to organizations who can supervise book lending, such as schools, Lion's clubs or labor unions. Teachers and students are the particular pets of the BBF and for that reason one hundred book lockers have been sent out with the joint blessing of the Library and the Mexican Secretariat of Public Education, to normal schools, agricultural schools and technical schools. These schools are situated anywhere from Baja California to Yucatán. Each booklocker is built to stand like a bookshelf and contains more than one hundred books, for the most part translations of U.S. books into Spanish. A few are in simple English for students of that language.

Among the treasures of the Benjamin Franklin Library is a small collection of rare books on Mexico, which may some day be presented to a Mexican institution. Among them is a second edition, (1655), of Thomas Gage's "New Survey of the West Indies: or, the English American, his travail by sea and land."

Recently the Benjamin Franklin Library was happy to present to the Director of the Centro de Documentación Científica y Técnica de México its second copy of an interesting herbal, now out of print. The book was an English translation of the Badianus Manuscript, originally written in Nahuatl in 1552 by Martín de la Cruz and translated into Latin by Juan Badiano. In this and a multitude of other ways the Benjamin Franklin Library is giving true service to Mexico and making hosts of friends for the U.S.



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